

# The LBFC PERFORMANCE REPORT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE  
PENNSYLVANIA LEGISLATIVE BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE

## 911 COMMUNICATION SERVICES ...

On September 13, 2022 the LBFC released its report, *A Study Pursuant to SR 96: 911 Communication Services*. SR 2021-96 tasked the LBFC to examine the administrative, operational, and financial performance of the 911 system at both the state and county levels, and to make recommendations on the reauthorization of the 911 communication service provisions. We reviewed county and state data for the period 2016 through 2020. Key highlights include the following:

- 911 is a county responsibility, with guidance, funding, and oversight through the PA Emergency Services Management Agency (PEMA). Act 12 of 2015, increased PEMA's responsibility and implemented a uniform \$1.65 surcharge on all telephonic services. This funding serves as the mainstay for both the counties and PEMA in supporting 911 services.
- On average, \$317 million in surcharge revenue was generated each year between 2016 and 2020 and generally remains consistent year to year. Of that amount, 83% goes to the counties, 15% is used for "interconnectivity" of 911 systems, and the final 2% is used for PEMA administrative expenses.

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- The 911 surcharge is funding the creation of the next evolution of 911 services known as NG911. This enhanced service will improve connectivity and geo-locating capabilities. NG911 is based on a statewide secure communication network, known as the Emergency Services Internet-Protocol Network (ESInet). Network development began 2021, and the first phase of NG911 implementation is scheduled to be completed in 2023.
- 911 call volume across the state decreased by 15 percent, including declines in wireline and wireless calls by 34% and 9%, respectively.
- Counties' total expenses grew by 22 percent over the observation period. The 911 Fund covered the majority of expenditures for all but two counties, and overall Fund-reimbursable spending increased by 18 percent. Personnel and operating expenses accounted for nearly 90 percent of all spending by the counties. While personnel spending is the main driver in many counties, operating expenses increased by 66% over the period, primarily because of the need to update equipment.
- Opportunities and challenges are present to the future of 911 and our report presents 17 recommendations to the General Assembly, PEMA, the 911 Advisory Board, and the county PSAPs.

• The Center Square published an article on *A Study Pursuant to SR 96: 911 Communication Services* on September 13, 2022: [https://www.thecentersquare.com/pennsylvania/pennsylvania-911-funding-hiring-expected-to-remain-challenging/article\\_acd880a2-3394-11ed-9e1a-038815f5c0d7.html?utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=email&utm\\_campaign=user-share](https://www.thecentersquare.com/pennsylvania/pennsylvania-911-funding-hiring-expected-to-remain-challenging/article_acd880a2-3394-11ed-9e1a-038815f5c0d7.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=user-share)

• CNHI News published an article on *A Study Pursuant to SR 96: 911 Communication Services* on September 13, 2022: [https://www.cnhinews.com/cnhi/article\\_2e02815e-3396-11ed-8146-6f641337e8c4.html](https://www.cnhinews.com/cnhi/article_2e02815e-3396-11ed-8146-6f641337e8c4.html)

# THANK YOU, SEN. MENSCH...



With the close of this legislative session, Sen. Bob Mensch (R-24) will retire after serving 16 years in the General Assembly. Sen. Mensch was first elected to the Pennsylvania Senate in a special election in 2009 after serving three years as the State Representative to the 147th Legislative District. He first served as a supervisor in Marlborough Township, Montgomery County from 2003 to 2005 and served as chairman of the board in 2005. In the Senate, Mensch was elected by his Republican colleagues to serve as Majority Caucus Chairman, a leadership position, for the 2020-2021 legislative session. As chairman he presides over Republican caucus meetings to discuss bills and amendments and to develop caucus strategy. He serves as Vice Chairman of the Health and Human Services Committee and sits

on the influential Senate Appropriations Committee. In addition, Sen. Mensch first joined the membership of the LBFC in 2011 and was elevated to the position of LBFC Chairman in 2013 and continues through today. We want to express our sincerest thanks to Sen. Mensch for his steady hand in leading the LBFC over the last nine years and especially for his genuine belief in and support of the role of the LBFC in the legislative process. Thank you, Sen. Mensch!

## A NOTE FROM SEN. MENSCH...



Sen. Bob Mensch  
LBFC Chairman  
2013-2022

I have truly enjoyed my years serving on the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, and surely my years as the Chairman. The work of the committee is very important to the General Assembly and serves to provide critical information for legislative consideration.

The staff of the LBFC is an incredible group of very talented individuals who are dedicated to their mission, and it is a pleasure to have worked with the team. LBFC is an award-winning legislative service agency which is great testament to their professionalism, thoroughness of reports, and the utility of the information for the General Assembly.

The fellow board members, and my fellow officers have made the work of the committee flow well, and efficiently. Even when there were disagreements, the members were professional in addressing their concerns, and that attitude has further contributed to the effectiveness of the committee.

As I finish my work in the General Assembly, I realize what an honor it was to work with such a fine team of professionals. I wish the committee and LBFC staff all the best in the future. Keep up the great work!



## MEDIA COVERAGE...

- The Allentown Morning Call cited the LBFC report findings in an article on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court change of venue for medical liability actions. The LBFC report, *A Study of the Impact of Venue for Medical Professional Liability Actions* (SR 2019-20), was released in February 2020.
- CCAP Legislative Bulletin - September 23, 2022, included a summary of the *Study Pursuant to SR 96: 911 Communication Services* released September 13, 2022.



# HONORING FORMER REP. GODSHALL...

On June 10, 2022, Governor Wolf approved HB 1560 as Act 23 of 2022. The Act was unanimously passed by both houses of the General Assembly and designates numerous roads and bridges across Pennsylvania in honor of men and women who devoted their lives to public service. The Act designates a portion of Pennsylvania Route 113 from the intersection with Schoolhouse Road in Franconia Township and State Route 4027, also known as County Line Road, in Souderton Borough, Montgomery County, as the "Honorable Robert W. Godshall Memorial Highway". Godshall served in the state House from 1983 through his retirement in 2018. He died on Nov. 24, 2019, at the age of 86. Rep. Godshall was a long-time member of the LBFC, including as committee secretary.

## LBFC REPORT ACTIVITY...

- Presentation to the Senate Local Government Committee on LBFC report An Assessment of Fees Charged by PA County Recorders of Deeds-LBFC Counsel and Executive Director presented the findings of the 2017 LBFC report at a hearing of the Senate Committee on August 10, 2022, as part of the discussion on Senate Bill 2021-898 which seeks to set predictable fees.
- Senator Mensch is the prime sponsor on Senate Bill 1136 which would amend the Vital Statistics Law to allow access to records by legislative agencies for research purposes as recommended in the report A Report in Response to HR 1087 of 202 COVID-19 Death Reporting.
- House Bill 2441 (Rep. Klunk) which would amend the Vital Statistics Law to allow access to records by legislative agencies for research purposes as recommended in the report A Report in Response to HR 1087 of 202 COVID-19 Death Reporting moved out of the House and is now in the Senate.

## STAFF UPDATES...

- Presentation at Local Government Symposium: the LBFC Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director presented A Report on the Limitations on Liability Under Pennsylvania's Sovereign and Governmental Immunity Laws Conducted Pursuant to Senate Resolution 2021-146 (released June 22, 2022) on October 6, 2022.
- LDPC security training took place in October.



## CONGRATULATIONS, MATT...

LBFC Analyst Matt Thomas was promoted from Analyst I to Analyst II on July 1, 2022. When asked, Matt said "I'd trade it all for a Penn State Big Ten Championship." LBFC Executive Director, Patricia Berger, said she'd see what she could do. (Remember, there's always next year.) Congratulations, Matt!



## ONGOING PROJECTS...

- **Act 2020-120:** Directs the LBFC to conduct a study of Pharmaceutical Benefits Managers.
- **Act 2016-86:** A study of the Northern Pennsylvania Regional College.
- **Senate Resolution 2021-53:** Requires LBFC to study PennDOT's highway maintenance funding.
- **House Resolution 2021-68:** A study of dental services in rural Pennsylvania.
- **Act 2017-55:** A study of the effectiveness of statutory provision for the process to suspend professional employees by school boards.



### LEGISLATIVE BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE

EST. 1959

*The mission of the Pennsylvania Legislative Budget & Finance Committee is to provide members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly timely, accurate, and unbiased information, analysis, and performance evaluation to inform their policy decisions.*

<http://lbfc.legis.state.pa.us/>



## ODD, SENSELESS TRIVIA...

- Dr. Seuss invented the word "nerd" (which he meant as a "comically unpleasant creature") in a book called *If I Ran To The Zoo* in 1950. ("And then, just to show them, I'll sail to Ka-Troo/And Bring Back an It-Kutch, a Preep, and a Proo,/A Nerkle, a Nerd, and a Seersucker too!")
- The blob of toothpaste that sits on top of your toothbrush is called a "nurdle".
- Barbie's (yes, the doll) full name is Barbara Millicent Roberts. And Ken?
- "Eigengrau" is the word used to describe the uniform dark grey background that many people see when in the total absence of light. (Scientists believe that eigengrau is the result of visual signals from the optic nerves.)
- Water makes different pouring sounds depending on its temperature. (Hot water produces a higher-pitched sound when poured because the energized molecules are moving more rapidly.)
- The fear of long words is known as "Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia". Clever, no?
- In a standard deck of cards, all four kings have beards, but the only king without a moustache is the King of Hearts. The question is why?

### LBFC STAFF

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